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## EDITORIAL COMMENT.

**Pseudoscience.** — The leading article of a recent issue of *The Forester*, entitled "On the Possible Effects of the Gypsy Moth on American Forests," is noteworthy as containing a number of far-fetched conjectures that are dangerously near charlatanry. The following quotation will more than substantiate our statement: "It is not unlikely that some of the curious alterations in the distribution of forest trees which geologists have recognized may have been due to the development in former ages of the Gypsy Moth or other like destructive species of insect. Thus in the early Miocene Tertiary Europe was tenanted by a host of arboreal species closely akin to those that now form our admirable American broad-leaved forests. The Magnolias, the Gums and the Tulip trees, etc., were then as well developed in Europe as they are in this country. Suddenly all these species disappeared from the old world. There is no reason to believe that the change was due to an alteration in climate. There are many evidences indeed that such was not the case. It is a very reasonable conjecture that that alteration was brought about by the invasion of an insect enemy which may have been the ancestor of the Gypsy Moth."

Against this "very reasonable conjecture" the words of Dr. Asa Gray may be recalled: "Probably the European Miocene forest was about as rich and various as is ours of the present day, and very like it. The Glacial period came and passed, and these types have not survived there, nor returned."

The statement also "that the naturalist who attained the unhappy success" of introducing the gypsy moth into America did so for the purpose of interbreeding the introduced insects "with various native species of moths, with the expectation of producing a hybrid which would feed on the leaves of our numerous American species of oak and produce a valuable kind of silk," shows an absolute lack of the first essentials of successful hybridization; moreover, it does injustice to a man of pure science whose imagination never rioted with vagaries.

**"News" in the American Naturalist.** — Owing to the length of time which must necessarily elapse between the preparation of